

Claims:

1. A method of generating user availability information from call control events within a telephone system, comprising:

receiving call control events from said telephone system, wherein each of said call
5 control events is ascribed one of either an absolute indicator of availability or evidence of availability;

updating a running sum for said user based on said evidence of availability; and

for each of said call control events to which said absolute indicator of availability has been ascribed generating an indication of said user availability based thereon, and otherwise

10 generating said indication of user availability on said running sum.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said running sum is updated by a discreet amount in response to call control events characterized by discreet evidence of availability and by incremental amounts in response to call control events characterized by
15 incremental evidence of availability, whereby said indication of user availability is maintained for a predetermined period of time in the absence of further call control events.

3. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said running sum is prevented from being updated by said incremental amounts beyond a predetermined default value.

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4. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein said indication is 'available' in the event said running sum exceeds a predetermined upper decision level, 'unavailable' in the event said running sum is below a predetermined lower decision level, and 'indeterminate' in the event said running sum is intermediate said predetermined upper and lower decision levels.

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5. A method as claimed in claim 4, wherein said default value is selected to bias said running sum toward said lower decision level.

6. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, further including the step of generating an indication of said user location based on location information in said call control events.

5 7. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein said absolute indicator of availability is one of either 'available' or 'unavailable'.

8. A system for generating user availability information from call control events within a telephone system, comprising:

10 an Event Queue for receiving and storing call control events from said telephone system, wherein each of said call control events is ascribed one of either an absolute indicator of availability or evidence of availability; and

an Interpretation Engine for accessing said call control events in said Event Queue 10 and for each of said call control events to which said absolute indicator of availability has been
15 ascribed generating an indication of said user availability based thereon, and otherwise generating said indication of user availability on said running sum.

9. A system as claimed in claim 8, wherein said Interpretation Engine updates said value by a discreet amount in response to call control events characterized by discreet evidence
20 of availability and by incremental amounts in response to call control events characterized by incremental evidence of availability, whereby said indication of user availability is maintained for a predetermined period of time in the absence of further call control events.

10. A system as claimed in claim 9, Interpretation Engine prevents said running sum
25 from being updated by said incremental amounts beyond a predetermined default value.

11. A system as claimed in claim 10, wherein said Interpretation Engine generates an indication of 'available' in the event said running sum exceeds a predetermined upper decision level, 'unavailable' in the event said running sum is below a predetermined lower decision level,

and 'indeterminate' in the event said running sum is intermediate said predetermined upper and lower decision levels.

12. A system as claimed in claim 11, wherein said default value is selected to bias
5 said running sum toward said lower decision level.

13. A system as claimed in any one of claims 8 to 12, further including the step of generating an indication of said user location based on location information in said call control events.

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14. A system as claimed in claim 8 and substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to or as illustrated in the accompanying Figures 1 to 5 inclusive.

15. A method as claimed in claim 1 and substantially as hereinbefore described with
15 reference to or as illustrated in the accompanying Figures 1 to 5 inclusive.